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WASHINGTON---The Newark Eagles and Philadelphia Stars pounded their way into a two-way deadlock for the Negro National League lead in the first half pennant race, this week, shoving the hitherto leaders, the New York Cubans into third place and forcing the defending champion Homestead Grays into fourth.

The Eagles, fresh from a 2-1 edge in a three-game series with the Baltimore Elite Giants, crushed the Cubans in a double-header before 12,000 at the Polo Grounds, Sunday, 7-1, and 6-2, with Leon Day and Rufus Lewis hurling brilliantly for the victors. At the same time, the Philadelphia Stars were handing the Elite Giants a double pasting at Baltimore, 8-4 and 4-3, and their twin win coming after successive victories over the Black Yankees and Homestead Grays, 4-3 and 4-0, respectively.

The Grays were unable to win a league tilt in three during the week's competition, bowing to the Cubans, Stars and Eagles on alternate nights, while the Cubans blew a good chance to dominate the first half by dropping the Sabbath bill.

Day heaved a four-hitter against the Cubans on Sunday, striking out six and exhibiting superb skill in the pinches while his mates nicked Barney Morris and Ray Seantlebury for a dozen blows, seven of which were bunched in two frames. Lewis ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~, granting the Cubans but ~~xxxxxxx~~ seven hits as his mates garnered 12, almost duplicated Day's performance. Irvin, Pearson, and Doby led the attack while Garcia was fielding star of the afternoon, snaring three almost impossible catches to rob Eagles of would-be hits.

At Baltimore, Henry McNairy and Jefferson checked the Elites while the Stars gave five Baltimore hurlers a busy day. Four Elites miscues contributed to their downfall, too.

Earlier in the week, the Eagles edged the Elites at Norfolk, Va., 4-2, with Lewis also the winning pitcher and Larry Doby clouting a home run as the big gun in the Birds' six-hit barrage off Bill Byrd.

The Eagles, featuring a new lineup with Pat Patterson, vet infielder, and Oscar Givens, former Morgan State College ace, in the fold, split the bill at Baltimore Friday, dropping the first game of the two-night affair, 3-2, and winning the ten-inning nightcap, 5-3. Jonas Gaines limited the Eagles to two hits while Len Hacker was touched for seven, with two of the three Elites' tallies unearned.

Max Manning and Joe Black duelled in the extra-inning nightcap, giving up 8 and 10 hits, respectively. Black struck out 10, but a tenth-inning rally pushed across the two tallies necessary for victory, with Lenny Pearson driving home the winning run.

With the Cubans facing the Grays and Philly Stars, and the Eagles slated for games against the Grays and Baltimore this week, the leap race is set for a nip and tuck stretch drive with either of the first four teams in position to gain undisputed advantage with a sustained victory streak.